

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Maclay Bridge

Other names/site number: 24MO0521

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: Milepost 0.1 on North Avenue

City or town: Missoula State: Montana County: Missoula

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☒

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☐
Public – Local ☒
Public – State ☐
Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☐
District ☐
Site ☐
Structure ☒
Object ☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION / road-related (vehicular)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION / road-related (vehicular)

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Parker through truss

Other: Warren pony truss

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: CONCRETE (footings)

Walls: N/A

Roof: N/A

Other: METAL / steel, CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Maclay Bridge is located on the outskirts of the City of Missoula, in Missoula County, Montana. This single-lane structure crosses the Bitterroot River, connecting the west end of North Avenue West, with the east end of River Pines Road. The surrounding area is dominated by agricultural fields. The Sapphire Range lies to the east and the Bitterroot Mountains to the west. The bridge is oriented northwest to southeast and has an overall length of 346 feet and is 16 feet wide. It consists of a 180-foot riveted Parker through truss main span, a 39-foot riveted sub-divided Warren pony truss span, and two 61-foot prestressed concrete T-beam approach spans on the southeast end of the structure. The Parker through truss was originally erected at another location in about 1935 and moved to the Maclay crossing in 1953. The two prestressed concrete spans were constructed in 1964. The date of construction of the Warren pony truss span has not been determined, but predates 1964.

Narrative Description¹

The substructure of the Maclay Bridge consists of a solid reinforced concrete pier that appears to have been constructed about 1923. The southeast end of the pony truss span rests on a solid concrete pier constructed circa 1953. The two prestressed spans rest on an open columnar type concrete pier with a concrete web wall. The bridge ends rest on concrete abutments with wing walls.

The riveted Parker through truss span measures 180 feet in length, 16 feet wide and has a roadway width of 14 feet. The truss consists of nine 20-foot panels. The upper chords are paired laced channel

¹ The narrative description for Section 7 was prepared by MDT Historian, Jon Axline, for the 2012 Montana Historic Properties Inventory Form

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sections with batten plates. A continuous steel plate is riveted to the top flanges of the chords. The lower chords are paired eyebars. Verticals are laced angle sections with batten plates. The diagonals are paired eyebars and the counters are eyebars with turnbuckles. Portal struts consist of angle sections with the top struts comprised of laced angle sections; the mid struts are angle sections. Top lateral and sway bracing include eyebars and eyebars with turnbuckles. The deck is supported by eight steel I-beam floor beams and eight lines of steel I-beam stringers. Additional support is provided by eyebar bottom lateral braces. The stringers support a corrugated metal deck, installed in 2003, with a bituminous asphalt overlay. The deck is flanked by angle section guardrails and modern channel section wheelguards.

The sub-divided Warren pony truss attaches to the southeast end of the main span. It measures 39 feet long and 16 feet wide with a 14-foot roadway width. The trusses consist of six 6½-foot panels. The upper chords are paired channel sections with batten plates and a continuous steel plate riveted to the top flanges. The lower chords are channel sections. The verticals are paired angle sections with batten plates, while the subdivided verticals are simple angle sections. The diagonals are angle sections. Gusset plates are riveted at the panel points. The trusses are further supported by angle section kneew brackets. The deck is supported by two steel I-beam floor beams and seven lines of steel I-beam stringers; additional support occurs from eyebar bottom lateral braces. The deck of the structure is corrugated metal with a bituminous asphalt overlay.

Two prestressed concrete approach spans occur on the southeast end of the structure; each measure 61 feet in length, 16 feet wide, and display a roadway width of 14 feet. Each span features four lines of girders. The deck is flanked by high steel guardrails mounted on steel I-beam posts. The handrail is steel pipe. Steel ribbon-style guardrails are bolted midway on the posts between the handrail and the wood curbs. These approach spans were added to the structure in 1964 after severe flooding destroyed the original southeast approach span and severely eroded the east river bank

Integrity

Although displaying three different components that includes a Warren pony truss, a Parker through truss, and two T-beam approach spans, no substantial changes, other than maintenance, have occurred to the Maclay Bridge since the construction and addition of the of the concrete spans in 1964. The bridge rests on a reinforced concrete pier constructed circa 1923, and a solid concrete pier installed around 1953 when the pony and through trusses were emplaced. The Parker through truss, likely constructed by the Federal Bureau of Public Roads, represents a typical Parker truss built at major river crossings in the 1920s and 1930s. The structural components and features common to the design are present on the truss and remain unchanged. The Parker truss retains its original upper chords, lower chords, verticals, diagonals, portal struts, mid struts, and top lateral and sway bracing.

While less information exists regarding the pony truss, it too illustrates a typical pony truss constructed in the early and mid-1900s in Montana. The pony truss also retains its structural components typical of the design including the upper chords, lower chords, verticals, diagonals, and gusset plates.

The setting of the site has changed very little since the original bridge crossed the river at this point, and has changed even less since the construction of the latest iteration of the bridge here. The surrounding area is still dominantly used for agricultural purposes. It appears and functions as it has since the addition of the two pre-stressed concrete spans in 1964, an important local crossing of the Bitterroot River in western Montana.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation

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Period of Significance

1953-1964

Significant Dates

1953 (erection of Parker through truss at Maclay Bridge site)

1964 (pre-stressed concrete approach spans added)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bureau of Public Roads / Henry B. Berky

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Maclay Bridge is significant under National Register Criteria A at a local level of significance. The period of significance extends from 1953, when the main Parker through truss was moved to the Maclay crossing, to 1964, when the two pre-stressed concrete approach spans were added to the structure. Although the current structure dates to between 1953 and 1964, a bridge has been located at this site since the early 1890s. During that period it has been an important crossing point for residents living on the west side of the Bitterroot River; the next nearest crossing of the river being located about four miles to the southeast. The bridge's structural components (the Parker through truss, the Warren pony truss, and the two pre-stressed concrete approach spans) are intact and largely unaltered since their emplacement at the Maclay crossing. Post-historic period modifications are limited to the existing corrugated metal deck and the wheel guards. Finally, although it is unusual to find pre-stressed concrete approach spans in association with steel truss bridges, the former have been components of the bridge since 1964. The combination of the different bridge types, steel truss and concrete, to form a single entity, fully displays the creative process required to construct an important link connecting the west and east sides of the Bitterroot River with minimal expenditure to the county.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Establishment of Missoula and Area Settlement

The Missoula Valley lies at the confluence of three major drainages, the Clarks Fork of the Columbia River, and its two major tributaries, the Blackfoot and the Bitterroot rivers. Prehistoric trails linking western Montana with geographic areas to the east and west converged in the vicinity of modern-day Missoula. People of many different ethnicities (Bitterroot Salish, Pen d'Oreille, Kootenai, Nez Perce, and Blackfeet) used these trails to journey to and from adjacent regions. After the Corps of Discovery traversed the valley in 1806, non-Indian explorers, trappers, and traders found their way into the area. In 1841, a small group of Jesuit priests established a mission in the Bitterroot Valley at the behest of the Bitterroot Salish, in the place now called Stevensville. When the priests pulled out, "Major John Owen purchased some of their improvements and established a trading post dubbed Fort Owen. Army Lt. John Mullan spent the winter of 1853-1854 encamped near Fort Owen at a place he called "Cantonment Stevens." Mullan's task was to survey the area for an appropriate route for a transcontinental railroad.² Although a railroad would not access the area for another 30 years, between 1859 and 1862, Mullan used knowledge gained during the 1853-1854 survey effort to locate and construct a military wagon road between Fort Walla Walla (now part of Washington State) and Fort Benton, Montana.

By 1860, construction of the "Military Road" had progressed to the Missoula Valley. Christopher P. Higgins, who acted as the wagon master during the early 1850s railroad survey, thought the area would be a good location for a trading post. Higgins and his partner, Frank Worden, built a small store adjacent to the well-traveled route. The store formed the nucleus of a small settlement known as Hell Gate Village, which served as the Missoula County seat between 1860 and 1866. In 1865, however, Higgins and Worden built the Missoula Flour and Saw Mills on the north bank of the Clark Fork River near the intersection of present-day Higgins and Front streets. Hell Gate Village was abandoned by most of its residents, who followed Higgins and Worden to the new location, which became known as Missoula.

The late 1860s and early 1870s witnessed an influx of non-native people into the valley, initially drawn to the mineral potential of the area. As is the case in most areas of the West, initial incursions by prospectors and miners were soon followed by more permanent occupants—farmers and small business owners catering both to people passing through and to area settlers. The federal census for 1870 recorded 2,544 people in Missoula County, which at that time incorporated most of Western Montana. Of these, only 100 lived in the town site proper.³

One of the earliest Euro-American settlers in the vicinity of the Maclay Bridge was Irish immigrant, Thomas Foley. Foley and his wife, Ellen, arrived in Missoula County in 1859 and established a ranch just east of the Bitterroot River.⁴ However, in the absence of approved federal land surveys, Foley could not legally file a homestead claim. Surveys of the townships in the vicinity of Missoula Mills were completed in 1870, and in 1872 Foley received an Agricultural Scrip Patent to 160 acres in Section 35, about a half mile south of the future site of the first Maclay Bridge. In 1874, another Irishman, Terrence McMurray, received an Agricultural Scrip Patent to 160 acres of land in Section 26 (T13N R 20W), a quarter-mile north of Foley's 1872 patent.⁵

² Allan J. Mathews, "A Guide to Historic Missoula," (Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society Press, 2002), 7, 9-11.

³ Ibid, 18.

⁴ *Butte Intermountain*, December 1, 1901, p.8.

⁵ Agricultural Scrip Patent Serial NO. AGS-0353-335 issued April 10, 1874 (www.glorerecords.blm.gov 8/10/2016). The lands claimed by McMurray and Foley were adjacent to one another and data from the 1870 census indicates that both

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In 1877, the federal government established the Missoula Military Reservation within the 640-acre Section 31 (T13N / R19W) just southwest of the Foley and McMurray ranches and about three miles southwest of the Missoula town site. Created under an Executive Order of February 17, the US Army occupied the reservation, the proximity of which encouraged continued non-Indian settlement.

In 1883, Missoula welcomed the arrival of the long-awaited Northern Pacific Railroad, which in turn facilitated a new wave of settlement in the area. The level bottom land in the vicinity of the Missoula Military Reservation, proved an attractive choice for agriculturalists.⁶ Lands in the immediate vicinity of the Maclay Bridge mostly were patented from the mid to late 1880s through about 1901. Although private citizens gained title to most of the agricultural lands as either Original Homestead Entry or Cash Entry patents, beginning in the late 1890s, the Northern Pacific Railroad received some parcels as 'lieu lands.'

Missoula's increased population made farming quite lucrative over the next 20 years. From 1890 to 1910, the fruit industry gained a significant foothold in the nearby Bitterroot Valley, and northward into the Missoula Valley.⁷ The fertile soils of the Bitterroot proved more productive than many other areas to the point that many of the small farms came to be generally known as orchard homes. Realizing the business potential of small-lot agriculture, in 1898 Robert Cobban and Samuel Dinsmore purchased 2,500 acres of land about two miles north of Fort Missoula on the east side of the Bitterroot River where they platted the first Orchard Homes Subdivision. The subdivision consisted of a series of 2.5-acre lots, which could be purchased singly or in larger quantities, depending upon the size of the agricultural operation.⁸ Heavily promoted throughout the state and the nation, the farms in the Orchard Homes subdivision boasted 16,000 fruit trees which supplied a significant amount of the produce for the Missoula market.⁹ The 1910 U.S. Census indicates that the Orchard Homes subdivision counted a population of about 200 people, or about 30 families.¹⁰

From 1900 to 1910, Missoula's population grew three-fold forcing many new residents to look for housing outside the downtown core. Some of the population settled west of town, including across the Bitterroot River, via the Maclay Bridge. Missoula's population continued steady growth after 1930 accounting for an increase of roughly 3000 to 5000 individuals every 10 years until 1980 when greater growth ensued.

By the middle of the 1940s, the continued population growth resulted in a construction boom, similar to many communities at the time. Housing increased dramatically with lots being subdivided. Rural areas, including the area near the Maclay Bridge, absorbed some of the new development. Missoula continued to grow outside its original boundaries as more businesses opened along Reserve Street to serve the expanding community. Plans for a shopping mall were in the works by the 1950, growing to fruition in

families, including two of McMurray's children, occupied the same household. Both men counted themselves as farmers, while Foley's wife, Ellen, "kept house."

⁶ Mathews 2002: 20 and 22.

⁷ Mathews 2002: 39.

⁸ Ann Emmons, Delia Hagen, and Michael Warren, "Results of a Cultural Resources Inventory of the Russell Street Expansion Corridor," *Historical Research Associates*, August 2002, 11; Orchard Homes Subdivision No. 4, 5, 6, Missoula County Surveyor's Office. Subdivision Plats accessed online at <http://www.co.missoula.mt.us/research/>.

⁹ Ibid; Mathews, p. 40.

¹⁰ Twelfth Census of the United States. Population Schedules for Hellgate Enumeration District. Government Printing Office, 1900; and Thirteenth Census of the United States. Population Schedules for Hellgate Enumeration District 63. Government Printing Office, 1910. The enumerator denoted subdivision names in the margins.

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1977 with the opening of the Southgate Mall opened at the corner of Russell St. and South Ave.¹¹ The steady increase in population was and is a result of Missoula's diverse economy which includes the university, the lumber yards, the rail yards, flour mills, agriculture, the Forest Service, and other government agencies.¹²

Crossing the Bitterroot River

In 1892, Pennsylvania native, William Plunket Maclay purchased a parcel of agricultural land in Section 27, straddling the confluence of O'Brien Creek and the Bitterroot River. Maclay proceeded to build a substantial farmhouse on the north bank of the creek, which served as the headquarters for his ranch over the next four decades.¹³ According to Maclay's descendents, it was William P. who built the first bridge at this location, in about 1893—soon after the initial land purchase. Prior to its construction, residents on the west side of the river had to cross the Bitterroot River at the old Buckhouse Bridge, which was located about three miles farther southeast. The new "Maclay" bridge shortened the time required to travel to Missoula—the center of commerce and trade, as well as the location of schools, church services, and social activities.¹⁴

The original bridge served the Maclay family and the community for only six years before it was damaged by spring flooding. An article in the April 20, 1899 edition of the *Anaconda Standard* indicated that the Missoula County Surveyor had identified several county bridges that could be threatened by high runoff, and consequently had let contracts for the placement of riprap adjacent to the bridge piers. The contract for riprapping the Maclay Bridge went to William Maclay.¹⁵ The effort, however, proved unsuccessful. In early July, the *Anaconda Standard* carried the following story:

The Maclay bridge across the Bitter Root is a wreck. The high water in the Bitter Root has taken out the west span and the stone pier at that end. Residents of the other (west) side of the river are compelled to drive up the stream to the Buck house crossing.¹⁶

By mid-July, "farmers and wood haulers from the Big Bend" (of the Bitterroot River) had come to Missoula to "interview" the county commissioners about reconstructing the bridge.¹⁷ Based upon a field review of the damaged bridge, they initially decided to try to keep the undamaged span and only replace the span destroyed by flooding: "The commissioners came to the above conclusion after figuring that to build a new bridge and to buy a new right of way could cost the county a great deal of money."¹⁸

Apparently, the commissioners lost little time in letting bids for the reconstruction of the Maclay Bridge. As reported in the August 10, 1891 edition of the *Anaconda Standard*, they awarded the job to O. E. Peppard, a bridge builder based in Missoula. Peppard actually submitted two bids: one for \$2,390 if he could reuse the surviving span, and \$2,990 if an entirely new structure was required. The amount awarded to Peppard was the larger of the two figures, indicating that the commissioners anticipated

¹¹ Emmons et al., 15.

¹² Ibid; Mathews, p. 41.

¹³ O'Brien Creek derives its name from David O'Brien, who patented the land adjacent to the stream/river confluence in 1888.

¹⁴ The character of Maclay's first bridge at this location has not been documented. However, if William did construct the bridge himself, or hired its construction, it may have been a wood timber bridge.

¹⁵ *The Anaconda Standard*, April 20, 1899 (Morning edition) p. 12.

¹⁶ *The Anaconda Standard*, July 6, 1899, p. 12.

¹⁷ *The Anaconda Standard*, July 19, 1899, p. 12.

¹⁸ *The Anaconda Standard*, July 28, 1899, p. 12.

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paying for an entirely new structure.¹⁹ Peppard completed the work on the new structure in December—roughly six months after the flood that destroyed the original bridge.²⁰

It is likely that the bridge erected by Peppard was the Pratt through-truss that occupied the site during the 1920s. According to Jon Axline, between about 1892 and 1915, “The standard steel truss bridge, both through and pony, bridge built by the counties ... was the pin-connected Pratt truss. Engineers initially developed the design to serve the railroads in the 1840s and then adapted them for use by horses and wagons.”²¹ Peppard, who spent years working for the Northern Pacific Railroad, would have been very familiar with the construction of Pratt truss bridges.



Photo of the Pratt through truss bridge that occupied the Maclay crossing in the 1920s and 1930s. Photo courtesy of Chuck Honeycutt.

Obert E. Peppard was born in Lansing, Michigan in 1855. The son of a bridge builder, he learned his trade from his father. He made his way to Montana as the Northern Pacific Railway’s supervisor of bridges and buildings in its Missoula division. In 1889 he left the railway’s employ to establish his own business:

Over the next three decades, Peppard built many bridges throughout western Montana, including the Van Buren Street Bridge (24MO248) in Missoula and nearly every vehicular bridge across the Bitterroot and Blackfoot rivers in western Montana. Like nearly every bridge-building company in the state in this era, he bid on all the major bridge projects. ... When he died in September 1929, the *Daily Missoulian* praised him as “one of the best known bridge builders and contractors of western Montana.”²²

During the next two decades, it appears that Maclay Bridge was the subject of only routine inspections and maintenance. In June of 1909, the Missoula County Commissioners inspected the bridge after which

¹⁹ *The Anaconda Standard*, August 10, 1899, p. 12.

²⁰ *The Anaconda Standard*, December 17, 1899, p. 12.

²¹ Jon Axline “Montana’s Historic Steel Truss Bridges,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form,” 2008, Section E, p. 2.

²² Axline 2008, Section E, p.3.

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they decided to “renew the plank,” on the structure’s west span.²³ Five years later, they again conducted an inspection of the bridge.²⁴ According to members of the Maclay family, in the spring of 1923 the bridge was damaged when a large tree carried by flood waters crashed into it. Clyde Maclay, William’s son, and a contractor by the name of John R. Harrington, reconstructed the bridge in its original location.²⁵

In 1948, another flood event impacted the Maclay Bridge. According to accounts in *The Daily Missoulian*, the entire western part of the state experienced severe flooding. The edition from Saturday, May 29, carried accounts of flooding on the Flathead River near Dixon and on the Bitterroot River south of Maclay Bridge. Along the Bitterroot River, the Klapwyk Ranch, located south of South Avenue below the Maclay Bridge was hard hit; flood waters stranded cattle and flooded at least one barn on the property.²⁶ Two days later, the front page of the newspaper carried multiple stories about the flooding: Five of the eight Bitterroot River bridges in the Bitterroot Valley had been closed due to hazardous conditions, and three bridges across the river near Missoula were “menaced,” including the Buckhouse Bridge, the Northern Pacific Railroad span, and the Maclay Bridge—all located southeast of Missoula.²⁷ By June 1, the flood waters in the Clark Fork and Bitterroot rivers began to recede, however, not before the west approach to the Maclay Bridge had “given way to the pounding of the flood.”²⁸ Two days later, the front page of *The Daily Missoulian* carried a photograph of a severely damaged Maclay Bridge under the headline, “West Span of Maclay Bridge Disappears in Swollen Bitter Root.” The photo caption read:

Here is the scene at the Maclay bridge site since flood waters of the Bitter Root river swept away the 100-foot west span of the structure Monday night. The span, which carried telephone and power lines, vanished completely before daylight, the wreckage washing in to the Clark Fork river. The bridge served the farm residents of the area southwest of Missoula, and if replaced at present prices would cost about \$350,000, county commissioners estimate. The loss of the bridge is the costliest single casualty to the county during the current high water period. County Surveyor R. J. Hale said the bridge was about 28 years old.²⁹

Hale’s estimate of the age of the bridge raises some interesting questions. The damaged bridge shown in the June 3, 1948 issue of the newspaper is a Pratt through-truss structure. Whether or not it represents the bridge constructed by O. E. Peppard in 1899 may be open for debate because if the county surveyor was correct in his assessment of the age of the bridge, it would have been built in about 1920—two decades after Peppard’s project. Also unclear, is the length of time that the bridge was out of service after the 1948 flood. It may be the case that the county hired local bridge contractor, H. B. Berky and Son, to repair the bridge soon after the flood.³⁰ This possibility is suggested by the fact that Berky sued Missoula

²³ *The Daily Missoulian*, June 4, 1909, p.6.

²⁴ *The Daily Missoulian*, September 3, 1914, p.6.

²⁵ “Maclay Bridge, Information and Updates.” www.maclaybridge.org. A review of the 1923 spring issues of the *The Daily Missoulian* failed to yield any local coverage of this event. This absence of evidence may indicate that the extent of the damage to the bridge was not so great as to be newsworthy, or that the date of its occurrence may differ from family remembrances. John F. Harrington, a bridge contractor did live in Missoula and routinely competed with other bridge contractors for work on county projects during the first two decades of the 1900s.

²⁶ *The Daily Missoulian*, May 29, 1948, p.2.

²⁷ *The Daily Missoulian*, May 31, 1948, p. 1.

²⁸ *The Daily Missoulian*, June 1, 1948, p. 1.

²⁹ *The Daily Missoulian*, June 3, 1948, p. 1.

³⁰ Born in Billings, Henry Berky moved to Carbon County by 1910. From 1913 to 1922, Berky either built or supervised the construction of 14 bridges in Carbon County. In the US Federal Census for 1920, he is listed as being widowed and living with his son and parents in Red Lodge, when he listed his employment as a “laborer” for Carbon County. By 1930,

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County in 1953, claiming that he had been reimbursed only \$5,250 of the \$50,458 total cost of “work and materials” to build a pier and an approach in 1948.³¹

What is certain is that by early 1952, Missoula County Commissioners began discussing the best way to replace the existing bridge. The optimal choice would be to build an entirely new structure; however, with a limited budget of only \$20,000 available for the project, a new bridge was not an option. Several possibilities were discussed but the one that appeared most feasible was relocating an existing bridge to the Maclay crossing. To this end, the county explored possible contenders for relocation. The Nine Mile Prairie Bridge on Montana Highway 200, which the Montana Highway Department bypassed in 1946, appeared a prime candidate.

In its original location, the Nine Mile Prairie Bridge crossed the Blackfoot River about five miles southwest of Clearwater Junction (the intersection of Montana 200 and Montana Highway 83), near the east edge of Missoula County. Built by Henry Berky in the late 1920s or early 1930s, the Nine Mile Prairie structure included a riveted Parker through truss main span and two approach spans.³² It is likely the bridge was constructed by the Federal Bureau of Public Roads (BPR), which typically built Parker through truss bridges at major river crossings during the 1920s and 1930s.³³ The bridge was abandoned in 1946 when the Montana Highway Department sponsored construction of a new bridge on Montana 200 on a different alignment than the original structure. When the new bridge was brought on line, the old bridge was simply abandoned in-place.³⁴

With Missoula County’s decision to relocate the Nine Mile Prairie Bridge to the Maclay Bridge site, it authorized the County Surveyor to submit the plans to the Montana Highway Department for review. Two months later, on August 29, 1952, the county commissioners directed County Clerk Joe E. Brown to advertise for bids for the “erection of the abandoned Nine Mile Prairie Bridge located approximately 35 miles north of Missoula . . . at the Maclay site approximately six miles southwest of Missoula.” The county commissioners received only one proposal when it opened bids on September 25. The Spokane-based Hansen and Parr Construction Company bid \$35,728 to relocate the bridge to the Maclay site. When the commissioners began discussing the proposal and the fact that only \$20,000 was available for the project, Parr hastily reconfigured the company’s bid, eventually proposing \$23,840 to “take down the Nine Mile Bridge, move it to and . . . erect at the Maclay crossing.”³⁵

Residents of the area who would be served by the new bridge met with attorneys Jack Rimel and R. E. Bulen and decided against raising additional private funds to complete the project. Consequently, the county commissioners rejected Hansen and Parr’s bid on September 27, 1952. Henry Berky, who attended the commission proceedings, announced at the meeting that he could relocate the Nine Mile Prairie Bridge to the Maclay crossing and place the structure on the existing piers for less than \$20,000. The commissioners withheld action on Berky’s claim, but directed the County Clerk to re-advertise for bids, to be opened on October 1. In addition, Commissioner Thomas Duncan inquired about the

Berky had remarried and moved to Three Forks, Montana where he worked as a bridge contractor. His son, Clifford, worked with his father as a carpenter. Berky moved to Missoula in 1931 and established himself as a concrete contractor. Between 1940 and 1952, he worked off and on for the Montana Highway Department as a carpenter and bridge supervisor. Carbon County Bridge Record; US Census Records 1910-1930; *The Missoulian* 1964; Missoula City Directories.

³¹ *The Billings Gazette*, “Contractor sues Missoula County,” April 3, 1953, p. 5.

³² Carbon County Bridge Record; US Census Records; *The Missoulian* 1964; US Census Records; Missoula City Directories.

³³ A review of the Missoula County Commissioner records and the Montana State Highway Commission records shows that neither of these entities funded the construction of the Nine Mile Prairie Bridge, leaving the BPR as the likely sponsor.

³⁴ County Commissioner Proceedings, book X: 1, 40; SHC 1941, book 8: 320; Bridge Construction File.

³⁵ County Commissioners Proceedings, book X: 1, 40, 60.

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ownership of the concrete piers at the Maclay crossing; indicating that because Berky had worked on the bridge previously, the commissioner believed the county needed an agreement with him to protect itself from possible litigation.³⁶ Duncan's comment likely refers to Berky's building a pier and approach following the 1948 flood. The county commissioners received two bids on October 1, 1952, one from Berky and the other from Hansen and Parr. They accepted Berky's bid of \$19,500 and entered into a verbal contract with him to construct the approaches for an additional \$400.³⁷ Berky completed his work on the "new" Maclay Bridge in 1953.

For the next ten years, the new Maclay Bridge withstood the seasonal flooding that periodically impacted the area. However a flood event in the spring of 1964 washed out a southeast approach span and a substantial portion of the river bank. The following September, the Missoula County Commissioners contracted with the Pew Bridge Company of Missoula to build a new pre-stressed concrete approach span at a cost of \$27,583.³⁸

Conclusion

Since completion of the new approach spans, the only modifications to the bridge have been the application of the corrugated metal deck with asphalt overlay and the addition of the guardrails, the latter likely within the last 20 years. Other than limited periods of closure resulting from flood events, some iteration of a Maclay Bridge has been in continuous use since the early 1890s. The present bridge illustrates the creativity envisioned by the Missoula County Commissioners in the face of the fiscal constraints of the time. The current bridge has served, and continues to serve, Missoula County residents for over 60 years.

³⁶ County Commissioners Proceedings, book X: 60, 62.

³⁷ County Commissioners Proceedings, book X: 85.

³⁸ County Commissioner Proceedings, Book CC, pp. 212, 231-33, 240.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Axline, Jon, *Conveniences Sorely Needed: Montana's Historic Highway Bridges, 1860-1956*. (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 2005).

Axline, Jon, *Montana's Historic Steel Truss Bridges National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form*, on file at the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena, Montana, . 2010.

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Bridge Inspection File No. L32101000+01001. Montana Department of Transportation, Helena.

General Land Office Records, *Bureau of Land Management*, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/default.aspx>

Carbon County Bridge Files. Clerk and Records Office. Carbon County Courthouse. Red Lodge, Montana.

Commissioners' Journal: Missoula County. Clerk and Records Office. Missoula County Courthouse. Missoula, Montana.

Emmons, Ann, Delia Hagen, and Michael Warren, *Results of a Cultural Resources Inventory of the Russell Street Expansion Corridor*, (Missoula: Historical Research Associates, 2002).

Maclay Bridge History, accessed June 20, 2016, www.maclaybridge.org.

Mathews, Allan J., *A Guide to Historic Missoula*, (Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society Press, 2002).

Missoula County Surveyor's Office, *Orchard Homes Subdivision No. 4, 5, 6*, Subdivision Plats accessed online at <http://www.co.missoula.mt.us/research/>

The Missoulian, "Henry Berky, Bridge Contractor, Is Dead," April 9, 1964.

US Census Records, 1910-1930. Viewed at: www.ancestry.com.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☒ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other
Name of repository: Records of the Board of County Commissioners

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 46.852988 | Longitude: -114.09755443851509 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

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UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 11 | Easting: 721258 | Northing: 5192918 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of this property is drawn to include the four bridge spans (the Parker through truss, the Warren pony truss, and the two prestressed concrete approach spans) the supporting piers and the two abutments. The bridge is 346 feet long and 16 feet wide.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Boundary is the extent of the Maclay Bridge proper.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Brian Herbel & Janene Caywood
organization: Rabbittbrush Archaeological Services / CRCS
street & number: _____
city or town: Missoula state: Montana zip code: 59807
e-mail: crcs@montana.com
telephone: 406 728-9190
date: August 13, 2016

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15-minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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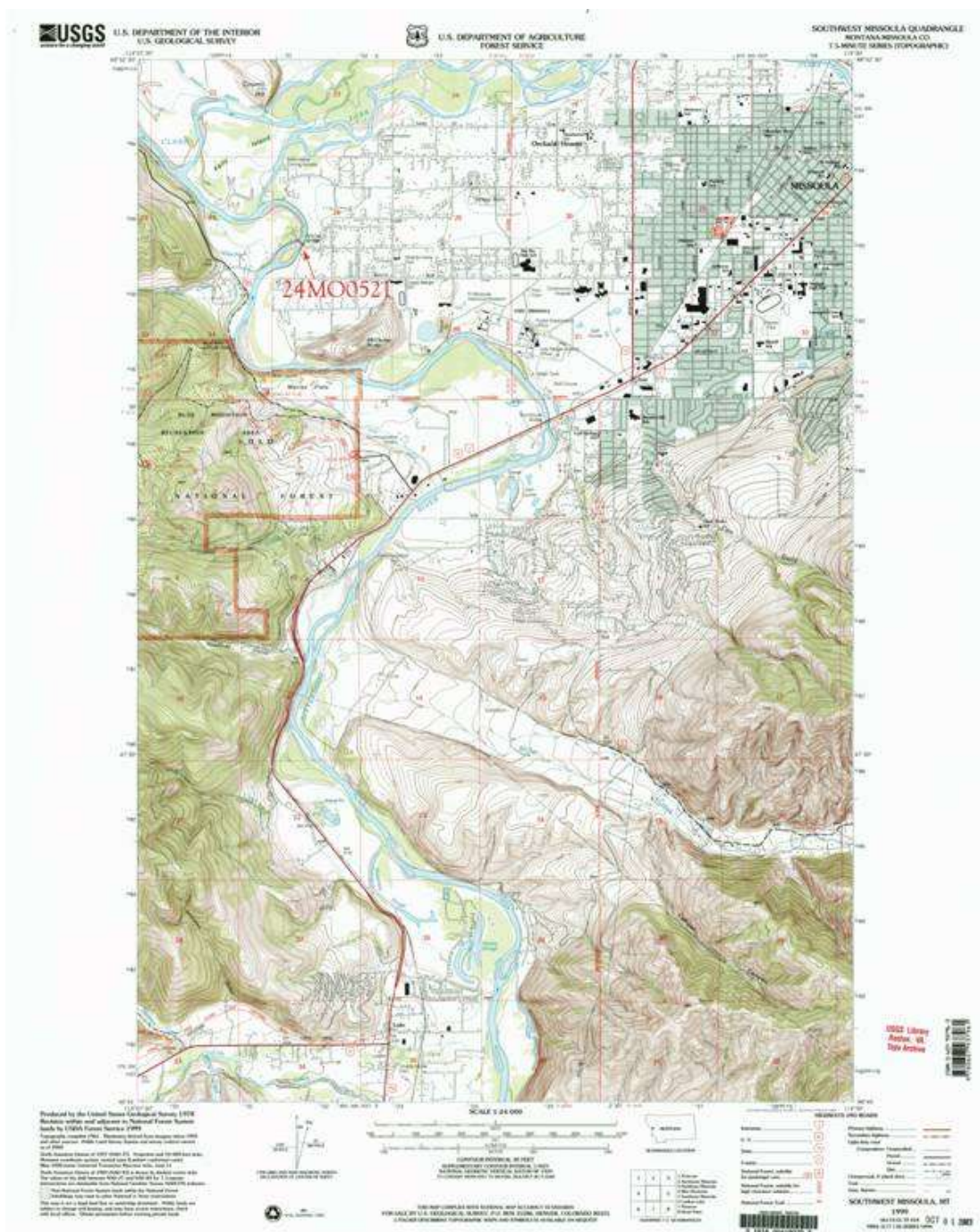
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7.5' Southwest Missoula (1999) USGS topo map showing the location of the Maclay Bridge, 24MO0521.

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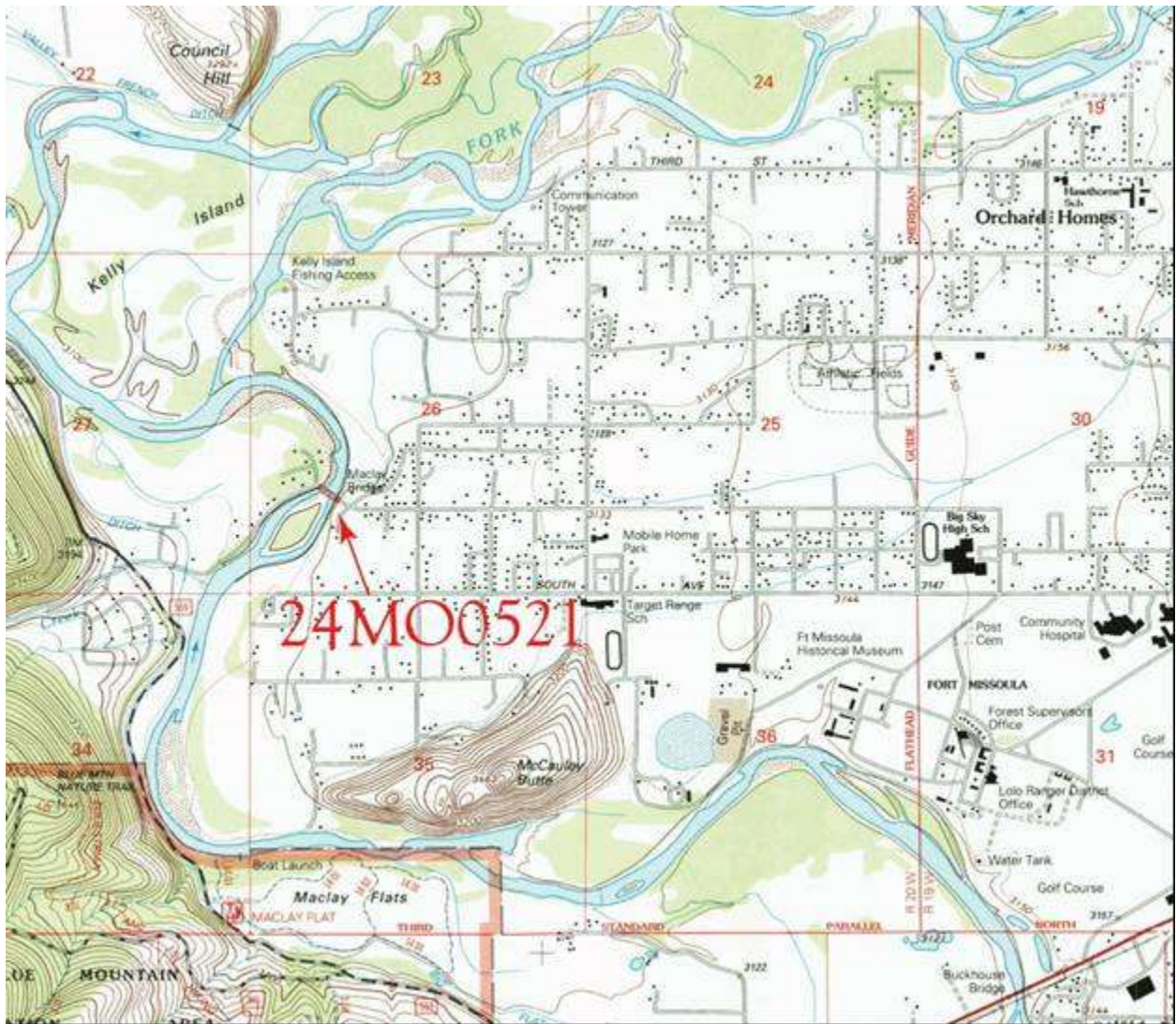
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7.5' Southwest Missoula (1999) USGS topo map (detail) showing the location of the Maclay Bridge, 24MO0521.

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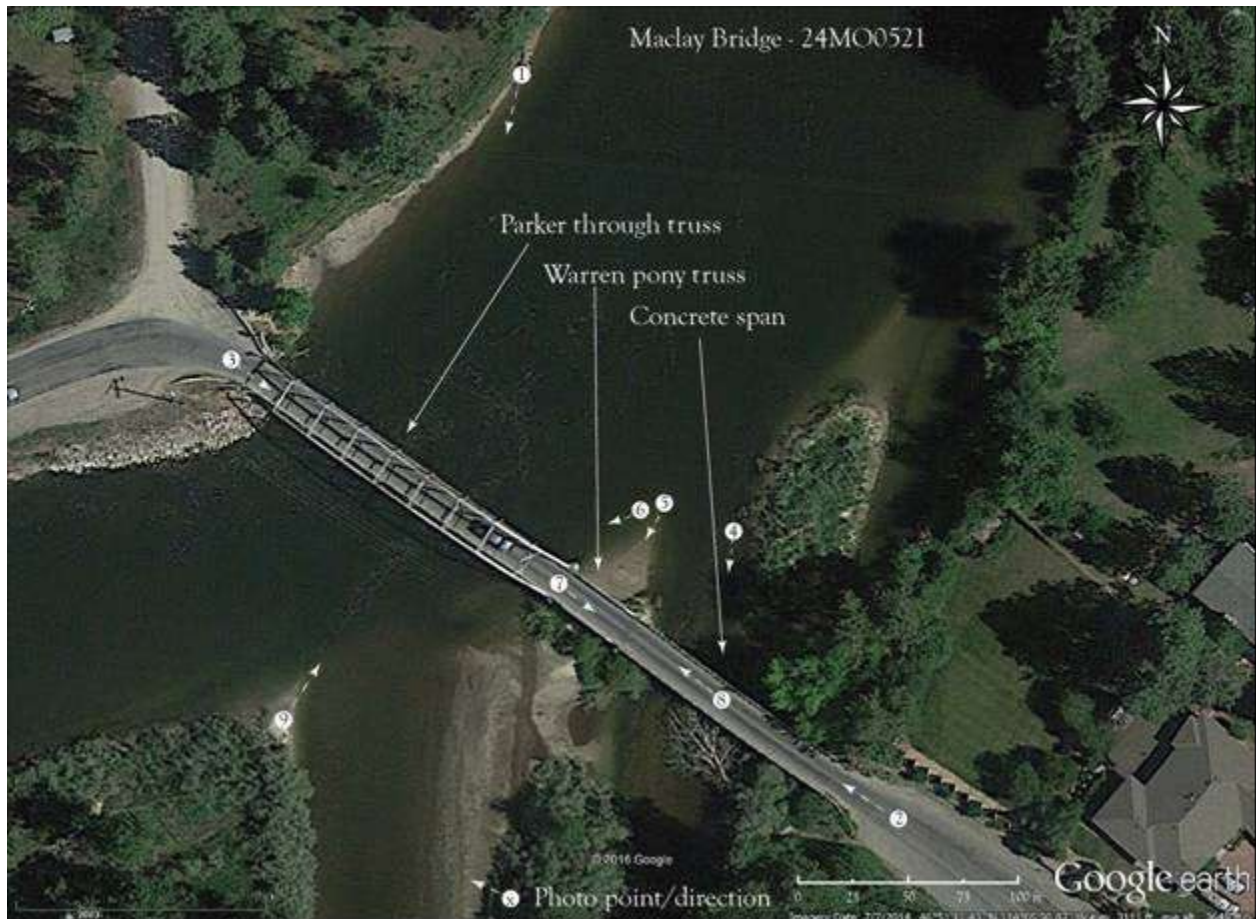
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Plan of the Maclay Bridge showing photo points

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

All Photos

Name of Property: Maclay Bridge

City or Vicinity: Missoula

County: Missoula County

State: Montana

Photographer: Brian Herbel

Date Photographed: July 8, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: See below.

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Photo MT_MissoulaCounty_MaclayBridge_0001 (1 of 9) - Maclay Bridge: overview looking south.

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Photo MT_MissoulaCounty_MaclayBridge_0002 (2 of 9) - Maclay Bridge: view to the northwest from east bank of Bitterroot River.

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Photo MT_MissoulaCounty_MaclayBridge_0003 (3 of 9) Maclay Bridge: view to the southeast from the west bank of the Bitterroot River.

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Photo MT_MissoulaCounty_MaclayBridge_0004 (4 of 9) Maclay Bridge: view to the south showing the two prestressed concrete T-beam approach spans: columnar type concrete pier mid span and solid concrete pier to the right where the span joins the southeast end of the Warren pony truss.

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Photo MT_MissoulaCounty_MaclayBridge_0005 (5 of 9) - Maclay Bridge: view to the southwest showing the Warren pony truss with the circa 1923 solid reinforced concrete pier to the right and possibly circa 1953 pier to the left.

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Photo MT_MissoulaCounty_MaclayBridge_0006 (6 of 9) - Maclay Bridge: view to the west showing the riveted Parker through truss component. Concrete abutment with wing walls on the west bank of the river / solid reinforced concrete pier at the junction of the through-truss and pony-truss components.

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Photo MT_MissoulaCounty_MaclayBridge_0007 (7 of 9) - Maclay Bridge: view to the southeast across the deck of the Warren pony truss component and of the pre-stressed concrete approach spans with high steel I-beam guardrails.

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Photo MT_MissoulaCounty_MaclayBridge_0008 (8 of 9) - Maclay Bridge: view to the northwest across the bridge deck.

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Photo MT_MissoulaCounty_MaclayBridge_0009 (9 of 9) - Maclay Bridge: view to the north showing the panels, channels sections, and angle sections of the riveted Parker through truss span.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.